

March 20, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL PEACE CORPS COUNTRY DIRECTORS

FROM: Jack Vaughn *Jack Vaughn*

SUBJECT: Bar to Employment of Volunteers, Staff Members and Trainees  
by Intelligence Agencies After Peace Corps Service

I should like to reinforce one of the most jealously guarded precepts governing the Peace Corps -- the complete separation of the Peace Corps from intelligence agencies. It is, as you know, a long-standing policy that no persons are eligible for Peace Corps employment or Volunteer service who have been previously employed by intelligence agencies or who otherwise have done intelligence or related work. As a corollary to this policy, we have asked intelligence agencies of the United States Government, and they have agreed, not to employ former Peace Corps Volunteers or staff members for at least several years after the completion of their Peace Corps service.

This policy, which is stated on pages 18-19 of the Employee Handbook and on page 40 of the current Peace Corps Handbook, deprives the Peace Corps of many excellent people and limits the job opportunities for returned Volunteers, for trainees who have served overseas, and for Peace Corps employees. But I believe this policy to be essential in the national interest to give the lie to the continuing attacks overseas by enemies of the Peace Corps that Volunteers and staff are intelligence agents.

The bar to employment of Volunteers, trainees and staff members by intelligence agencies has several particulars which this memorandum makes specific. While the information on this subject has been given to all trainees by OVS staff personnel as a part of the orientation to Peace Corps policies, and has been presented to all Peace Corps staff, I ask that you point out the following to staff and Volunteers.

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The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has agreed not to employ any former Volunteer or staff member for at least five years following the completion of his Peace Corps service. Should the CIA employ a former Volunteer or staff member following the five-year bar, it will never assign him to the country or countries of his Peace Corps service.

The Defense Intelligence Agency, and even the National Security Agency, which is not considered an intelligence agency, have made similar agreements with the Peace Corps. However, in the case of those agencies the employment bar lasts for four rather than five years following the completion of Peace Corps service.

A letter from the Assistant Secretary of Defense to the secretaries of the military departments states that a former Volunteer or staff member who enters military service will not be assigned intelligence duties while serving as an enlisted man. If that former Volunteer or staff member serves as a commissioned officer, he will not be assigned intelligence duties until he has completed at least four years of military service following receipt of his commission, and he will never be assigned intelligence duties in the country or countries of his Peace Corps service.

NEVER?  
I have asked that the foregoing rules be fully applicable to trainees whose Peace Corps service ends after they have gone overseas. Trainees whose Peace Corps service ends before they go overseas would not be subject to the foregoing limitations on employment. However, we have asked the intelligence agencies not to assign a former Peace Corps trainee to civilian or military intelligence duties in the country for which he received training in the Peace Corps.

Please make certain that your entire staff, including physicians, clearly understands these limitations on its and the Volunteers' subsequent involvement in civilian and military intelligence activities. It would be unwise, in my view, to circulate overseas in writing anything more detailed than appears in the Handbooks, but you and your staff should discuss these limitations with all your Volunteers, individually or in groups. Please write me or the General Counsel if you have any questions about the application of the policy.

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